

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method for making a restructured seafood product, comprising:

(1) modifying the surfaces of more than one frozen seafood portions chunks by a first step steps comprising:

(a) obtaining more than one frozen seafood portions chunks from a selected seafood species;

(b) treating the surfaces of the more than one mixing the frozen seafood portions chunks with at least one of phosphate and 1% by weight or less of salt for a sufficient time of no more than 10 minutes and at a sufficient temperature of no more than 32°F to produce surface-modified frozen seafood portions chunks;

(2) preparing a surimi-based binder by a second step steps comprising:

(a) obtaining surimi flesh of a similar seafood species;

(b) mixing the surimi flesh with at least one of a phosphate and salt, a starch, and water to produce a surimi-based binder;

(3) coating the modified surfaces of the frozen seafood portions chunks with the surimi-based binder, the amount of binder being less than 10 wt.% of the seafood product, and

(4) forming the binder-coated, surface-modified frozen seafood portions chunks into a restructured product, the product including about 1 wt.% frozen seafood chunks bound with the binder, 1% by weight or less phosphate and/or of salt and the seafood portions being one of either chunks or fillets; and

(5) elevating the temperature of the restructured product to above 32°F for a period sufficient to set the binder less than 10% by weight of binder.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the sufficient time is about 30 seconds to about 2 to 3 minutes.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, further comprising treating the surfaces of ~~more than one~~ the seafood portion chunks with phosphate and salt.

5. (Original) The method of Claim 4, wherein the salt is sodium chloride and the phosphate is a polyphosphate.

6. (Original) The method of Claim 4, wherein the salt is sodium chloride and the phosphate is tetrasodium pyrophosphate.

7. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the seafood portions chunks are one of at least a salmon, a whitefish, and a shellfish.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the surimi-based binder is derived from one of at least a salmon, a whitefish, and a shellfish.

10. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the seafood portions chunks are derived from a salmon and the binder is derived from a salmon.

11. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the seafood portions chunks are randomly oriented throughout the product.

12-14. (Canceled)

15. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the binder comprises about 23% to about 53% water by weight.

16-18. (Canceled)

19. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising elevating the temperature of the product to about 350°F for about 15 seconds.

20. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising cooking the exterior surface of the product to a depth no more than about 1 mm.

21. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the temperature of the seafood portions chunks does not exceed 28°F during steps (1), [[(2)]] (3), and [[(3)]] (4).

22. (Canceled)

23. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the average seafood portion chunk weight is no more than 1 ounce.

24-26. (Canceled)

27. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the product has at least one rounded surface.

28. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the binder comprises less than 5% by weight of the product.

29. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the binder comprises greater than 30% water by weight.

30. (Currently amended) A method for making a restructured seafood product comprising:

to a plurality of frozen seafood portions chunks that have not been modified on the surfaces by a phosphate or salt, adding a surimi-based binder containing at least one of phosphate and salt and having functional groups suitable to attach to mixing the seafood chunks with the binder wherein the salt of the binder is sufficient to create binding sites created on the surface surfaces of the seafood through the action of the phosphate and/or salt in the surimi-based binder, said attachment occurring through covalent and/or hydrogen bonding, the product including about 1 wt.% or less phosphate and/or salt chunks;

forming the frozen seafood portions chunks into a restructured seafood product, wherein the binder product comprises frozen chunks of seafood bound with the binder, less than 10% by weight of the product, and the seafood portions being one of either chunks or fillets; and

elevating the temperature of the restructured product to above 32°F for a period sufficient to set the binder, and 1% or less by weight of salt.

31. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 30, wherein the temperature of the chunks is not raised to more than about 32°F.

32-42. (Canceled)